

COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO
HEAD START-PRESCHOOL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
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Scabies

What is scabies? It is a skin infection caused by a microscopic bug called a mite. The mite lives on the surface and burrows down into the skin causing:

- Skin rash, which:
 - starts as red bumps and white thread-like lines
 - appears between fingers, around wrists, elbows, underarms, nipples, abdomen, waist, buttocks, penis, feet.
- In infants-head, neck, palms, and soles
- itches intensely, especially at night
 - is often covered with scratch marks and bruises

How do scabies spread? They spread by:

- Touching or scratching the sores on the skin
- Sharing towels, clothes, bedding, and furniture

When are scabies contagious?

- From *weeks before* the symptoms until treatment is completed.
- When the mites are off the body (e.g., on clothes, furniture), they die within four days.
- After exposure, it can take four to six weeks to develop symptoms. For people who have been previously exposed to scabies, symptoms can start within one to four days.

How do I know if my child has scabies? If your child has the symptoms, see your doctor. Scabies are diagnosed by the signs and symptoms. Sometimes, a skin scraping may be examined under the microscope.

What should I do if my child has scabies?

Treatment: Follow the treatment prescribed by your doctor. Some scabies medications are dangerous for infants and women who are pregnant or nursing.

- Apply the medicated body lotion, leave on, and rinse off according to instructions.
- Repeat treatment after seven to 10 days to kill newly-hatched mites.
- Calamine lotion or antihistamine medications might reduce itching.

Keep your child home until: after treatment is completed. Notify your Head Start program.

To limit the spread:

- Check everyone at home and at school for signs of scabies. Refer for medical evaluation and treatment if necessary.
- Don't share hats and jackets. Keep personal clothes and bedding separate in individual cubbies for each child.
- Launder clothes, linen, bedding, stuffed animals, and small carpets in a machine with detergent and hot water. Dry in a hot dryer or press with a hot iron. For non-washable items (e.g., hats, pillows), dry-clean or seal in a plastic bag for four to seven days.
- Vacuum carpets, upholstered furniture, and car seats.